

Idaho Public Health Home Decontamination Recommendations

The June 26th edition of the Daily Planet newspaper may have contained deadly anthrax spores. For people who had a copy of this issue inside their homes, the only sure way to avoid possible exposure to anthrax is to leave your home. We know this may be a hardship or unrealistic for many people, and have developed recommendations for people to decontaminate their homes. Please be aware that no one has experience or proven techniques for household decontamination. We have consulted with Homeland Security and federal experts to develop the best information available for you to decontaminate your home and make it as safe as possible. The decontamination recommendations provided below are the most up-to-date information we have today; however, even by following these precautions you could possibly expose yourself to anthrax.

We will continue to seek additional information and update these recommendations to help you protect yourself and your family. Please consult with your district health department or visit the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's website for the latest updates on home decontamination—www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov.

Recommendations as of Thursday, June 29th

1. Turn off all fans and air conditioning and leave them off until further instructions are provided. If the house becomes too hot, seek shelter elsewhere after decontaminating yourself and your home.
2. Using rubber gloves, spray the June 26th edition of the newspaper with one part bleach to 10 parts water solution. Bag the newspaper in two plastic bags and securely close them. Place it in a location outside the home, but away from people and animals. Do not place in the trash. Recommendations on disposal will be available soon.
3. Using rubber gloves, spray down household areas that the newspaper touched with the bleach solution. Let the bleach solution sit on the contaminated sites for 15 minutes. Be advised bleach solution will discolor fabrics and carpeting. After 15 minutes, wipe up the residue with paper towels and double bag these towels. Again, place the bags safely outside the home away from people and animals, but do not place in the trash. Disposal instructions will be available soon.
4. After cleanup is complete, with your clothes on, hose or shower yourself. Carefully remove your clothes, including your underwear, and double bag them. Securely close the bags and place in a location outside the home, but not in trash.
5. Shower yourself for five minutes with warm water and soap.
6. If you were exposed to the June 26th edition of the Daily Planet, preventive treatment is essential. Please contact your healthcare provider or go to one of the District Health clinics on Thursday, June 29, to receive preventive medication.